

# ROSE BAY SECONDARY COLLEGE



# MUSIC ENSEMBLE PROGRAM

## NEWSLETTER TERM 1 2007

Welcome to 2007! It's going to be a great year for the music ensemble program (MEP), and before it gets underway it seems like a good idea to provide a bit of a wrap-up on an eventful 2006. In this newsletter are reports from music faculty head Donna Masterson, tutor program coordinator Helen Ranger (also conductor of the choir and vocal ensemble and music faculty member), treasurer Geoff Andrews and, with his vision for 2007, program director Luke Gilmour. You'll also find some key dates and contact information.

The aim of the changes implemented last year was to offer students more and better quality musical experiences and opportunities via a program that runs well. That continues to be our aim, and again some changes will be needed to achieve it. Some of these are outlined in Luke's report (see over)– to hear more about what's proposed, please come along (parents/carers and students) to our MEP information night, on Wednesday February 7 at 7pm. Luke will be there together with ensemble conductors, instrumental tutors and members of the MEP committee to detail what the program offers and answer any questions you may have.

Other changes concern the role of parents in running the program. As the program grows so does the workload and the responsibility – and we need help. We urge parents to get involved in whatever way they can – a good place to start is by coming to a committee meeting. The first meeting for the year is on February 21 at 7pm. If you can't make it but would like to contribute in some way, give me a call.

Finally, a reminder about fees. As the MEP program is almost entirely funded by your membership fees, prompt payment of these when you receive your invoice is essential in order for us to meet our commitments to the ensemble

directors and to plan for the year ahead. In cases of hardship, it may be possible to organise financial assistance – if you'd like to apply for this, contact me in the first instance. All inquiries will be treated confidentially.

*Sally Zwartz, convenor,  
MEP committee, ph. 0408 791526*

## Changes of Note 2007

- The jazz ensemble becomes a stage band
- Stage band members expected to play in the concert band as well
- Private tuition a requirement for ensemble members (not those in choir or vocal group)
- A training band is introduced for the first time
- Changes to the tutor program

Read about these changes in the program director's report, overleaf. To find out more come to the information night, Wednesday February 7 at 7pm. To ask questions and have your say, come to the MEP committee meeting Wednesday February 21 at 7pm.

### COMING UP

**MEP INFORMATION NIGHT**  
Wednesday February 7, 7pm  
for parents AND students

**MEP COMMITTEE MEETING**  
Wednesday February 21 7pm  
all parents old and new very welcome

# Music Faculty Report

At the end of 2005 the parent committee and RBSC music faculty were eager to develop our instrumental ensembles and saw the need to employ band leaders who were skilled in conducting. There was a healthy number of applicants for the positions of concert band and jazz ensemble conductors and after a rigid audition process, we decided unanimously that Luke Gilmour be given the position of jazz ensemble conductor and director of our ensemble program while Rochelle Beeson was appointed concert band conductor.

Both achieved great success in the small amount of time they have had with their respective bands and we are very pleased with the amount of skill already developed by our young performers. They are sounding balanced, in tune, and the repertoire is demanding yet attainable. The performances by both bands at our annual MADDD

night were extremely tight and I couldn't believe the improvements that both bands had made in such a short space of time.

Helen Ranger, music teacher and choir conductor, once again did a sterling job with the choir and vocal ensemble in 2006. They are learning very demanding works, singing a capella, and sounding better than ever. Both ensembles had many gigs to perform at and were often called upon at the last minute to perform, which they did very well.

Susan Andrews, our other music teacher and string ensemble conductor, spent hours arranging repertoire for our string group, who performed at a variety of venues. They are developing into a very talented group learning improvisation techniques. Susan even repaired our school viola with the intention of learning it to add to the depth of the ensemble.

*Donna Masterson, head teacher,  
RBSC music faculty*

## Program Director's Report

Welcome everyone to the RBSC music ensemble program for 2007!

### Firstly, a recap on last year...

2006 was a busy year for us all and to have so much support has been very encouraging. I would like to thank all students, staff and committee members for helping us to settle in. The middle of term 3 saw some significant changes in the life of the ensemble program with Rochelle and I being appointed as new conductors for the concert band and jazz ensemble, but everyone seems to have embraced the new direction with great enthusiasm. Thank you!

With Rochelle, the concert band flourished as she took the group in the direction of more traditional concert band repertoire. All those who witnessed their performance at the MADDD night in term 4 provided tremendous feedback about the concert band's improvement under Rochelle's leadership.

2007 will see the concert band expand in instrumentation as incoming Year 7s who are

already skilled are welcomed into the group. More challenging repertoire will also be introduced as the band expands its skill base. Unfortunately, Rochelle is unable to continue with us in 2007 and I would like to thank her for the tremendous amount of support she gave me. Her skills and leadership will be missed by the RBSC community but both Rochelle and I are confident that the ensemble program will thrive in 2007.

The jazz ensemble really started to fire in term 4 and I was very impressed with their dramatic improvement in a relatively short amount of time. I would like to thank all members of the jazz ensemble for welcoming me as their new conductor and for their ongoing commitment. Next, I intend to expand the group into a full

### **NEW TO THE MEP?**

***Get involved! This parent-run program needs lots of support. Come along to the first MEP committee meeting for 2007 – Wednesday February 21, 7pm. Everyone welcome.***

stage band with five saxes, three trombones, three trumpets and rhythm section. We were also privileged to have the Navy Jazz Group give the RBSC jazz ensemble a masterclass. Having workshops with skilled musicians is something that I will be continuing in 2007.

### **Looking forward in 2007...**

A new band will be added to the mix this year with RBSC's first training band. This will be an ensemble for absolute beginners. The instrumentation will be structured around the traditional concert band format so that students can later progress into the concert band and stage band. ie. flutes, clarinets, saxes, trumpets, trombones, tuba, percussion. I would encourage all students who aren't yet involved in the ensemble program to consider learning a band instrument and joining our inaugural training band.

The training band will be conducted by the very talented Melanie McLoughlin. Melanie is a new addition to the MEP and has recently returned from eight years in Europe. Whilst abroad Melanie performed on trumpet with many of England's top orchestras including the Royal Philharmonic, BBC Symphony Orchestra and the English National Opera. She was also employed as a secondary school music teacher at St Marylebone School. Melanie will be a tremendous asset to RBSC and I trust that you will join me in welcoming her to our program.

The school's well established choir, vocal and string ensembles will be also be welcoming new students this year.

For all those wishing to join the stage band (previously jazz ensemble), membership of the concert band is a prerequisite. The reason for this is that it is imperative that students achieve a grounding in a variety of styles to ensure adequate technical and musical development. Also, private tuition is an expectation of anyone participating in any of the ensembles, other than choir and the vocal group.

As mentioned above the jazz ensemble will become a stage band in 2007. With this in mind, auditions will be held on Monday of Week 2, Feb 5 for all interested participants (in fact may have been held by the time this reaches you). The auditions will involve a short 10 minute interview/audition where the student will be required to play one short

### **INSTRUMENTS FOR SALE**

If you have instruments for sale or know someone else who does, let us know! Send us contact details and a brief description of the instrument and we'll include it in the next issue (term 2) of our newsletter. You can also post a notice on the MEP noticeboard (see music staff or Luke Gilmour for details).

piece of their choosing, two scales of their choice and some sight reading. Apart from proficiency on their instrument, other factors will be considered including commitment and whether private lessons are currently being undertaken.

The audition process and private tuition are a necessary part of the MEP's new design. Careful consideration of the makeup of each ensemble is necessary in order to maintain a high standard and is not intended to discourage students. The RBSC MEP seeks to provide an opportunity to achieve musical excellence.

The RBSC MEP is positioned exceptionally for phenomenal growth over the next five years and once the foundations for each ensemble are firmly established, I envisage that even more ensembles may be added to the mix. For example, a percussion ensemble, another jazz group and a saxophone ensemble are all future possibilities. I would encourage everyone to embrace the program with a positive attitude even though things are a little different to the past. As we move forward together, I believe everyone will be thrilled with the results.

I look forward to meeting with you at our information night. If you can't make it but have questions or suggestions, please give me a call.

*Luke Gilmour, ph. 0425 238 045*

## **Tutor Co-ordinator's Report**

In 2006 we incorporated several new instrumental tutors into our tutor program. This has been a highly successful, positive experience for many of our students who have chosen to learn instruments ranging from guitar, piano, bass, saxophone, clarinet, flute, trumpet, trombone, drums and singing.

*Helen Ranger, 2006 tutor coordinator*

# Treasurer's Report

In 2006, the MEP was again supported by the college with access to its facilities and allocations of staff time for conducting and administration.

However, as the numbers in the program grew, it was necessary to introduce ensemble fees to provide more conductors and cover other expenses. The fees were set at the low end of fees for comparable programs in other schools.

By the end of term 4 2006 we had received \$9,275 in fees from ensemble members which just covered the costs of the professional conductors for the ensembles as well as music, equipment, uniforms, transport and competition entry fees. We also subsidised participation in the masterclasses by ensemble members.

We also raised \$7,391 from the sausage sizzles at Bondi Beach and Bondi Junction markets, coffee and cakes at the MADDD night and three other college functions, raffles and some great busking by the students. We need this income for working capital in 2007 and to buy new musical instruments.

*Geoff Andrews, MEP committee*



## **DON'T FORGET**

The MEP is managed by parents for the benefit of all students in the program. It's almost entirely funded by membership fees. The program's success depends on YOUR support. If you don't have the time to take a role on the committee or come to meetings, there's still plenty you can do:

- Pay fees promptly on receipt of your invoice
- Help with fundraising
- Come to concerts with friends and family
- Make sure your children attend rehearsals and performances — and that they get there on time

## **MEP REHEARSAL TIMETABLE 2007**

<i>Ensemble</i>	<i>Director</i>	<i>Time</i>
Vocal group	Helen Ranger	Tues 8.15am
Training band	Melanie McLoughlin	Wed 3-4pm
Concert band	Luke Gilmour	Wed 3-4pm
Stage band	Luke Gilmour	Wed 4-5pm
Choir	Helen Ranger	Thurs lunch
String ensemble	Susan Andrews	Thurs 3.30pm

For details of venues, check MEP noticeboard.

## **IMPORTANT DATES**

MEP information night	Wed Feb 7, 7pm
MEP committee meeting	Wed Feb 21, 7pm
Primary schools workshop	March Mon 19
Music night	March 29

And there's more to come – watch this space!

## **TUTORS**

As of 2007, students enrolled in the concert, stage or training ensembles are expected to have private tuition on their instruments. Students may make their own arrangements for instrumental lessons or choose to use one of the tutors listed below, some of whom give lessons at the school. The list is not yet complete as for some instruments tutors are yet to be confirmed.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Instrument</i>	<i>Phone</i>
Nick Fowler	Piano (classical and jazz)	9349 3909
Paul Turner	Guitar (classical and jazz)	0425 279 675
Oskar de Maris Jones	Guitar (classical/beginners)	04522 466 289
Helen Ranger	Flute	
Luke Gilmour	Clarinet, saxophone	0425 238 045
Nick Garbett	Trumpet	0419 997 833
Hal Strewé	Electric bass	0415 401 441
Ben Shemesh	Drums	0415 090 673.
Matt Capper	Percussion/drums	0421 047 919

## **SPONSOR A SAX**

*The MEP is trying to raise the funds to buy a baritone saxophone. At \$3000+ this is going to take some time – so if you'd like to help with a donation, don't be shy! Include any extra payment when you pay your invoice.*